

(12) **United States Patent**
Edelhaeuser et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,317,445 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Apr. 19, 2016**

(54) **RAPID MEMORY BUFFER WRITE STORAGE SYSTEM AND METHOD**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal dis-
claimer.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/764,602**

(22) Filed: **Feb. 11, 2013**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2013/0151776 A1 Jun. 13, 2013

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 12/337,963, filed on
Dec. 18, 2008, now Pat. No. 8,386,736.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

G06F 12/06 (2006.01)
G06F 12/10 (2006.01)
G06F 12/02 (2006.01)
G06F 12/08 (2006.01)
G11C 7/22 (2006.01)
G06F 9/38 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **G06F 12/109** (2013.01); **G06F 12/02**
(2013.01); **G06F 12/0215** (2013.01); **G06F**
12/0802 (2013.01); **G06F 12/0804** (2013.01);

G06F 12/0862 (2013.01); **G11C 7/22**
(2013.01); **G06F 9/3802** (2013.01); **G06F**
12/0207 (2013.01); **G11C 2207/2245** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC **G06F 12/207**; **G06F 13/1673**; **G06F**
12/0207; **G06F 12/0215**; **G06F 12/0862**;
G06F 9/3802; **G11C 16/10**; **G11C 7/22**
USPC **711/105**, **154**, **202**, **213**
See application file for complete search history.

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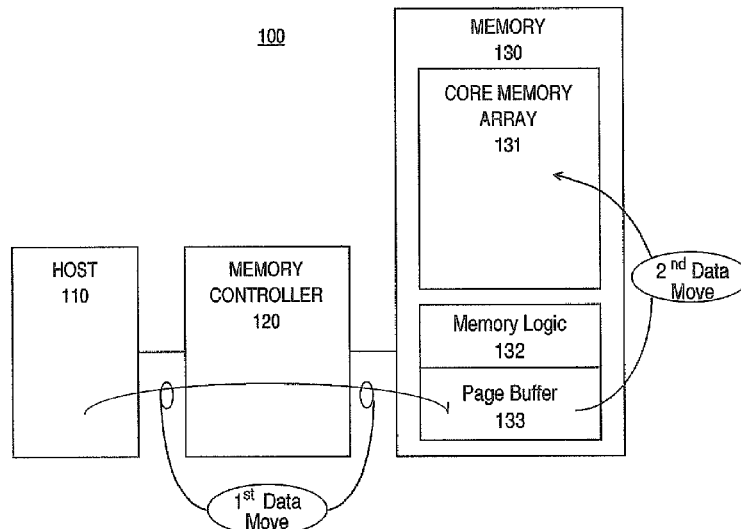
Primary Examiner — Than Nguyen

(57)

ABSTRACT

Efficient and convenient storage systems and methods are
presented. In one embodiment a storage system includes a
host for processing information, a memory controller and a
memory. The memory controller controls communication of
the information between the host and the memory, wherein
the memory controller routes data rapidly to a buffer of the
memory without buffering in the memory controller. The
memory stores the information. The memory includes a
buffer for temporarily storing the data while corresponding
address information is determined.

20 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets



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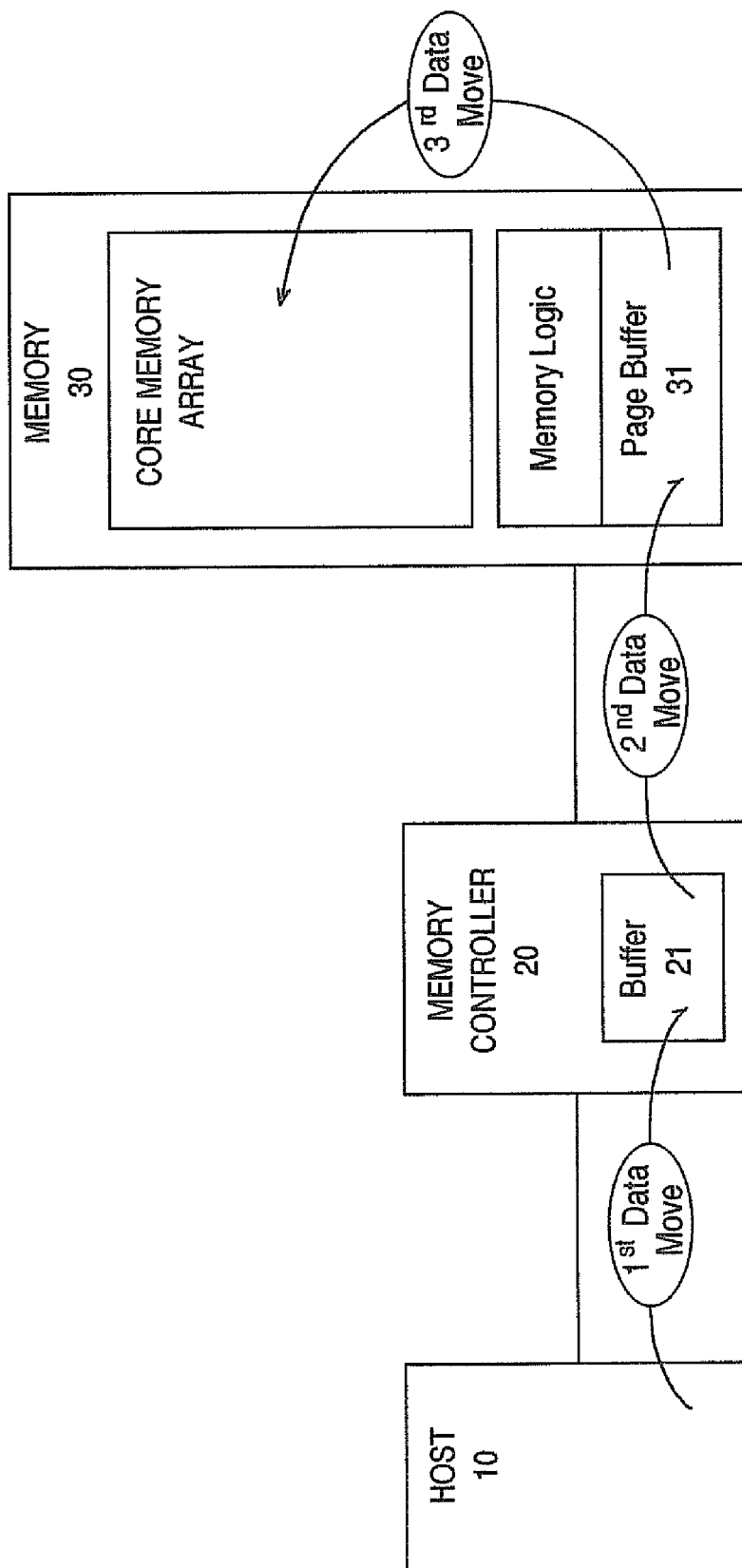


FIG 1A

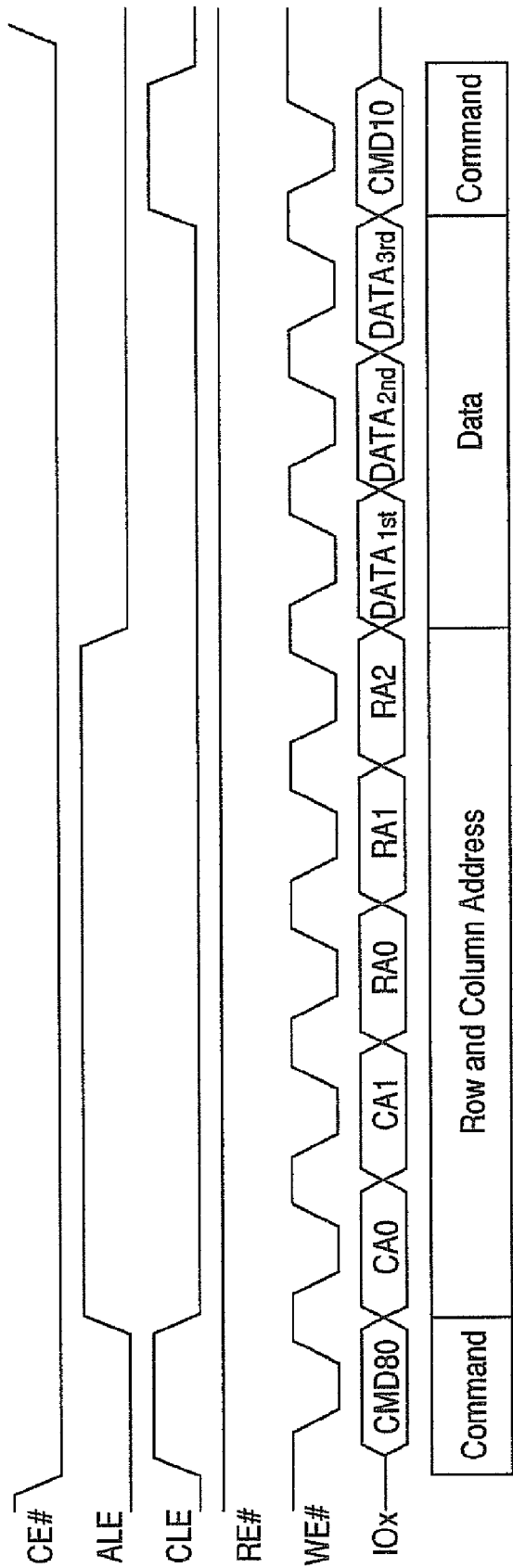


FIG 1B

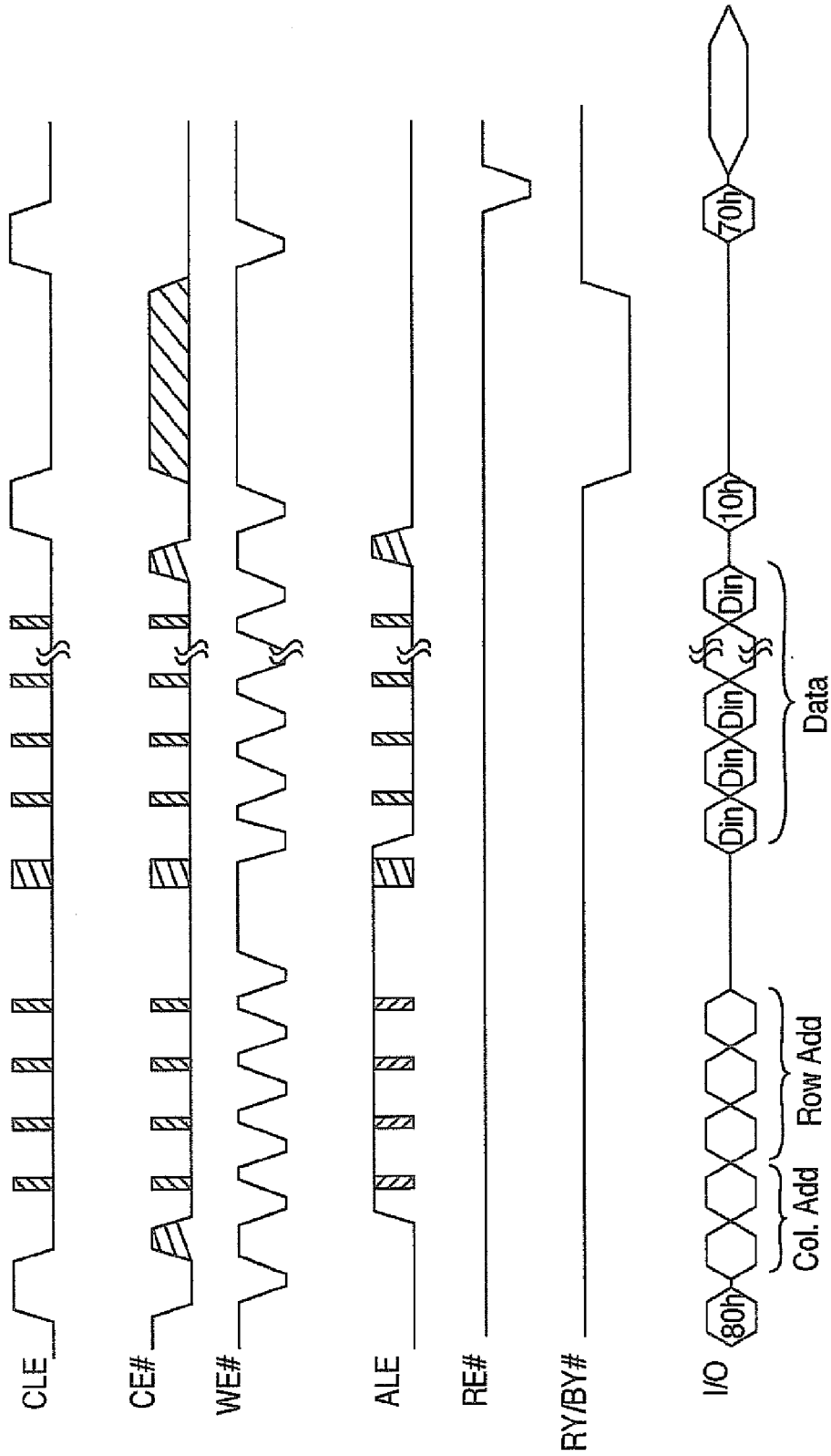


FIG 1C

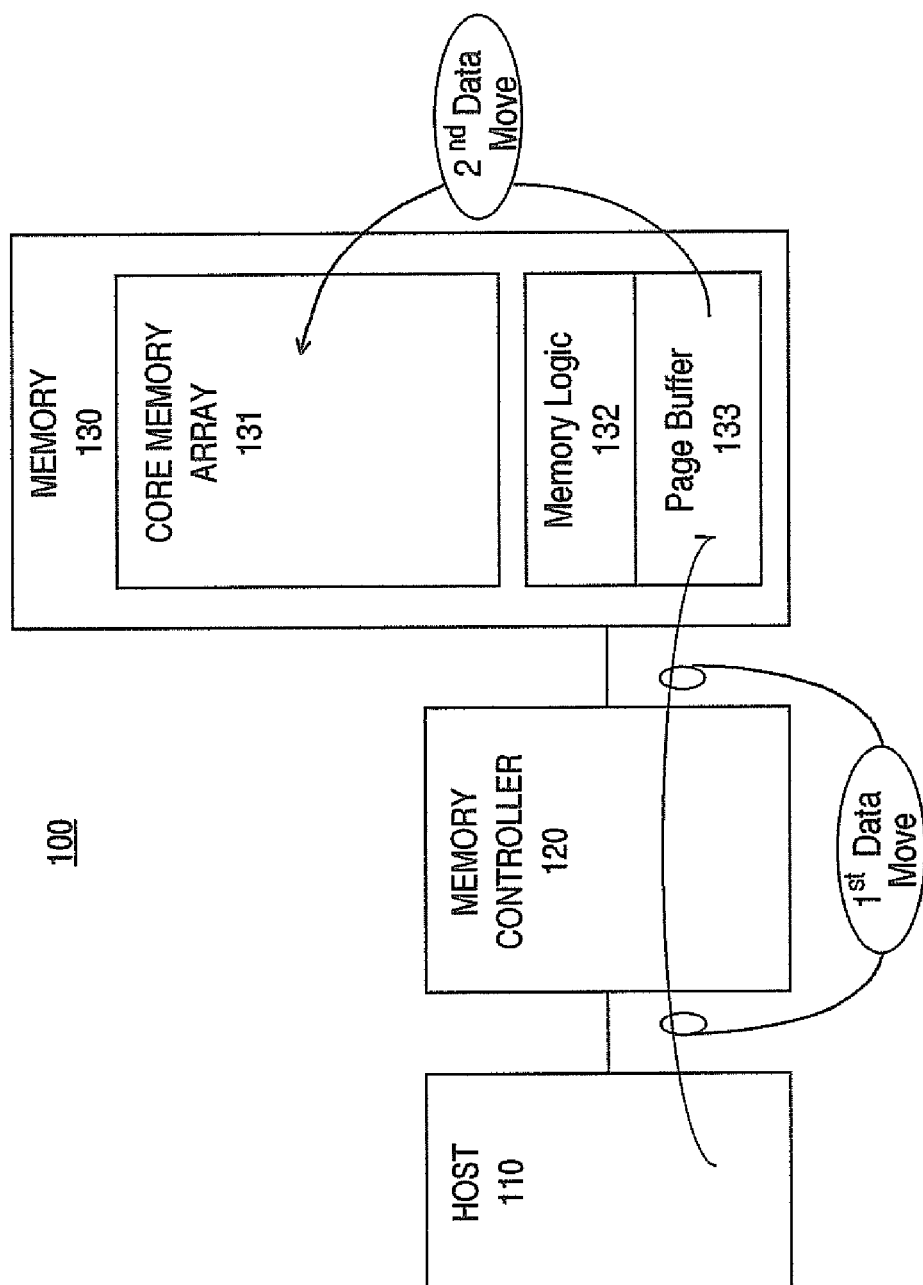


FIG 2

300

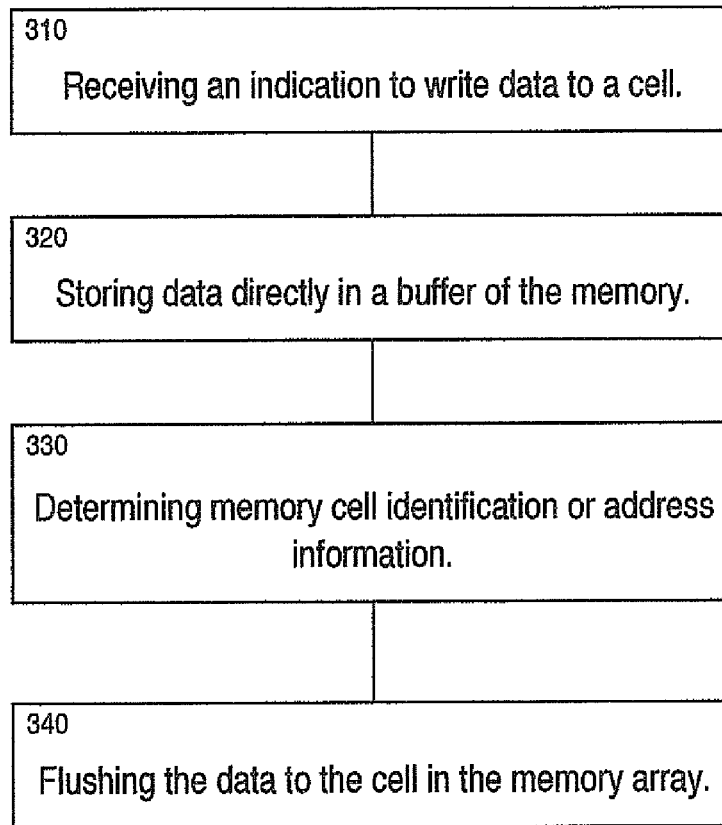


FIG 3

400

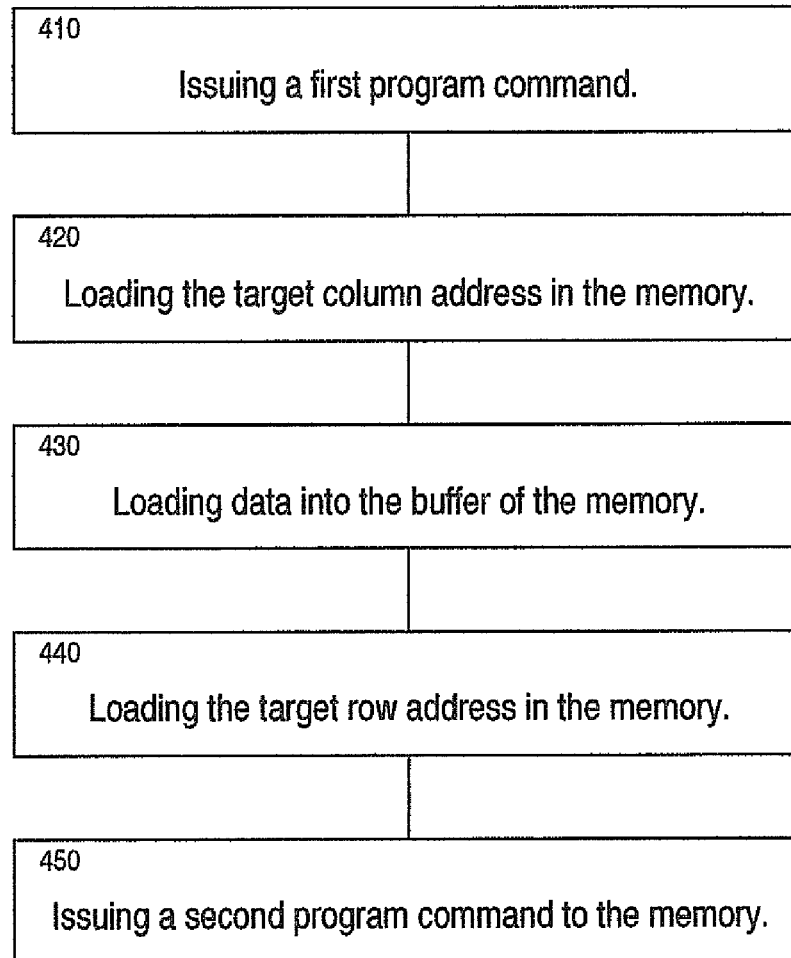


FIG 4A

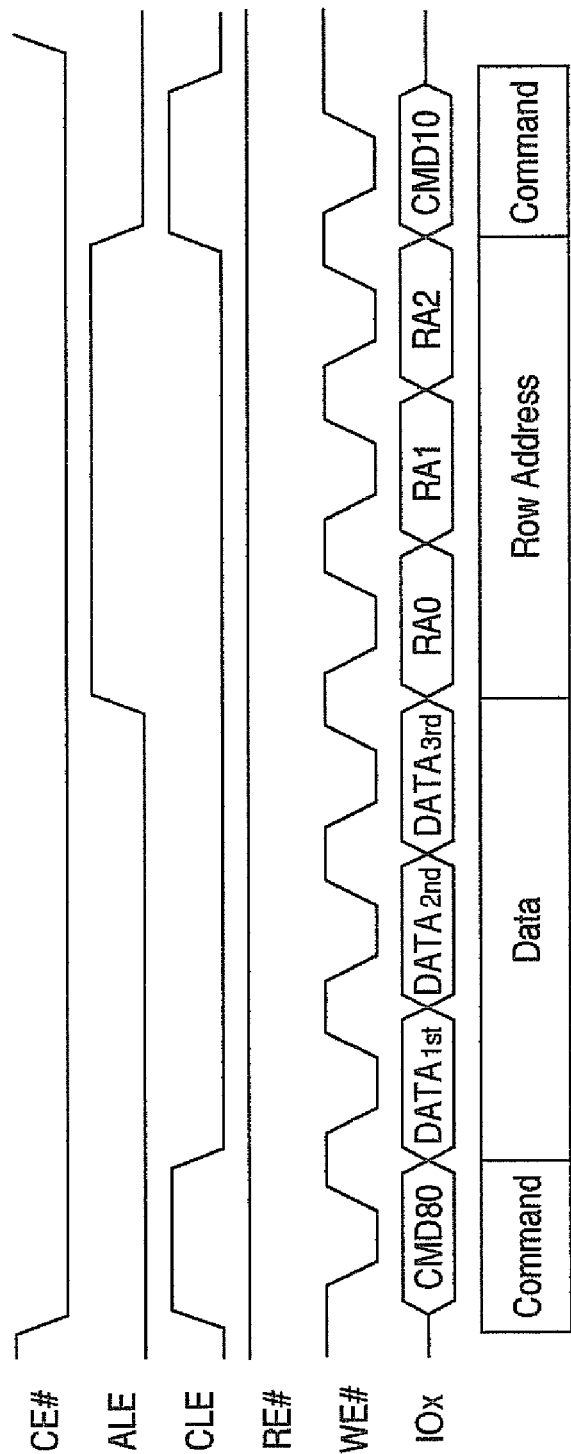


FIG 4B

500

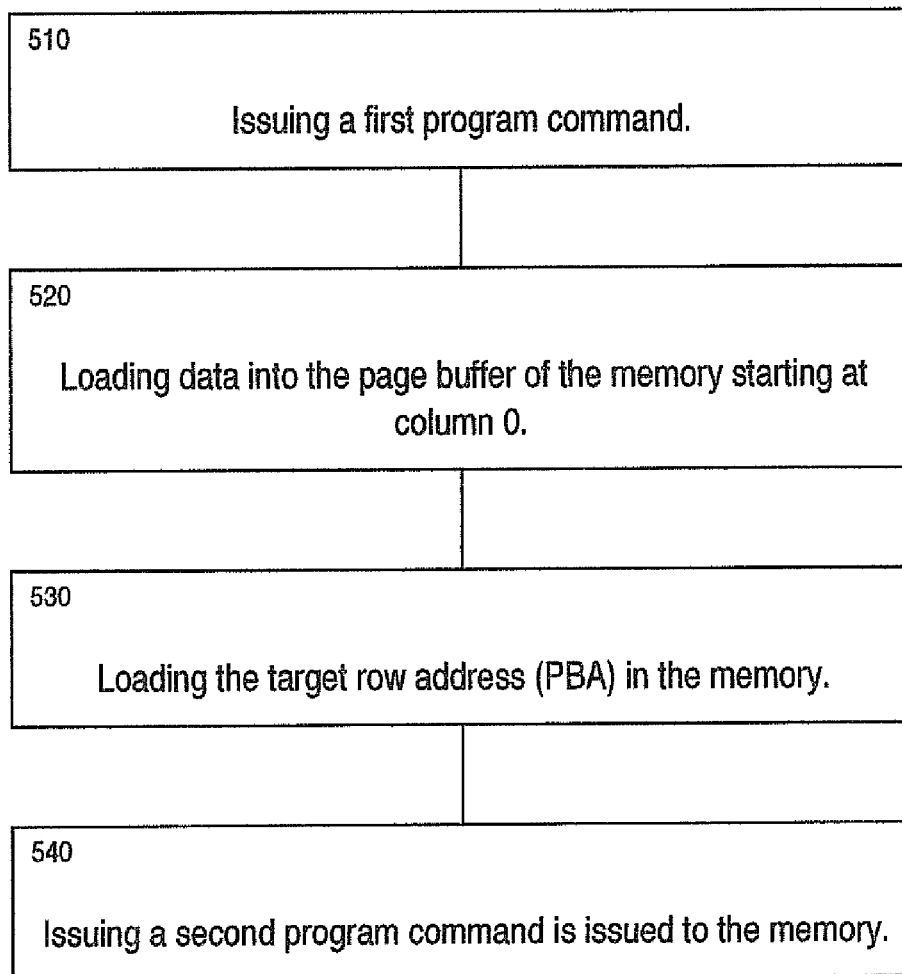


FIG 5A

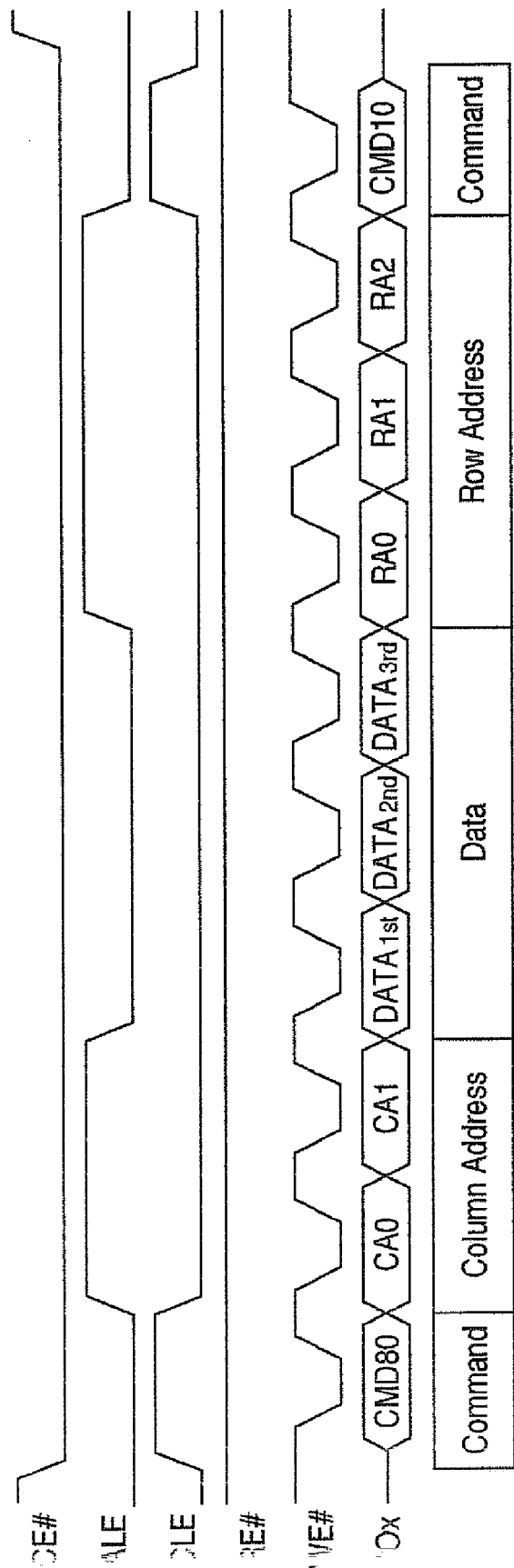


FIG 5B

600

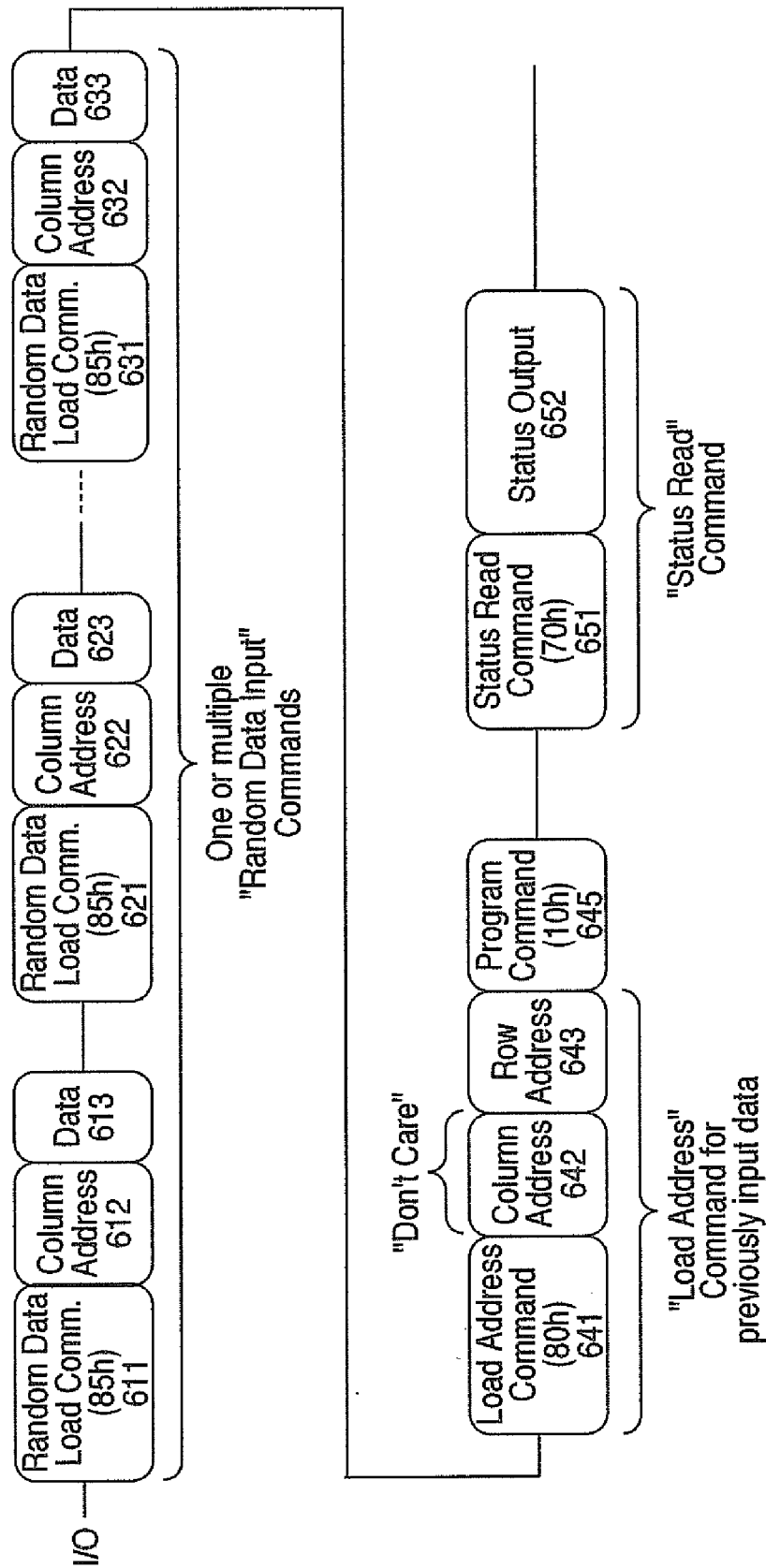


FIG 6

700

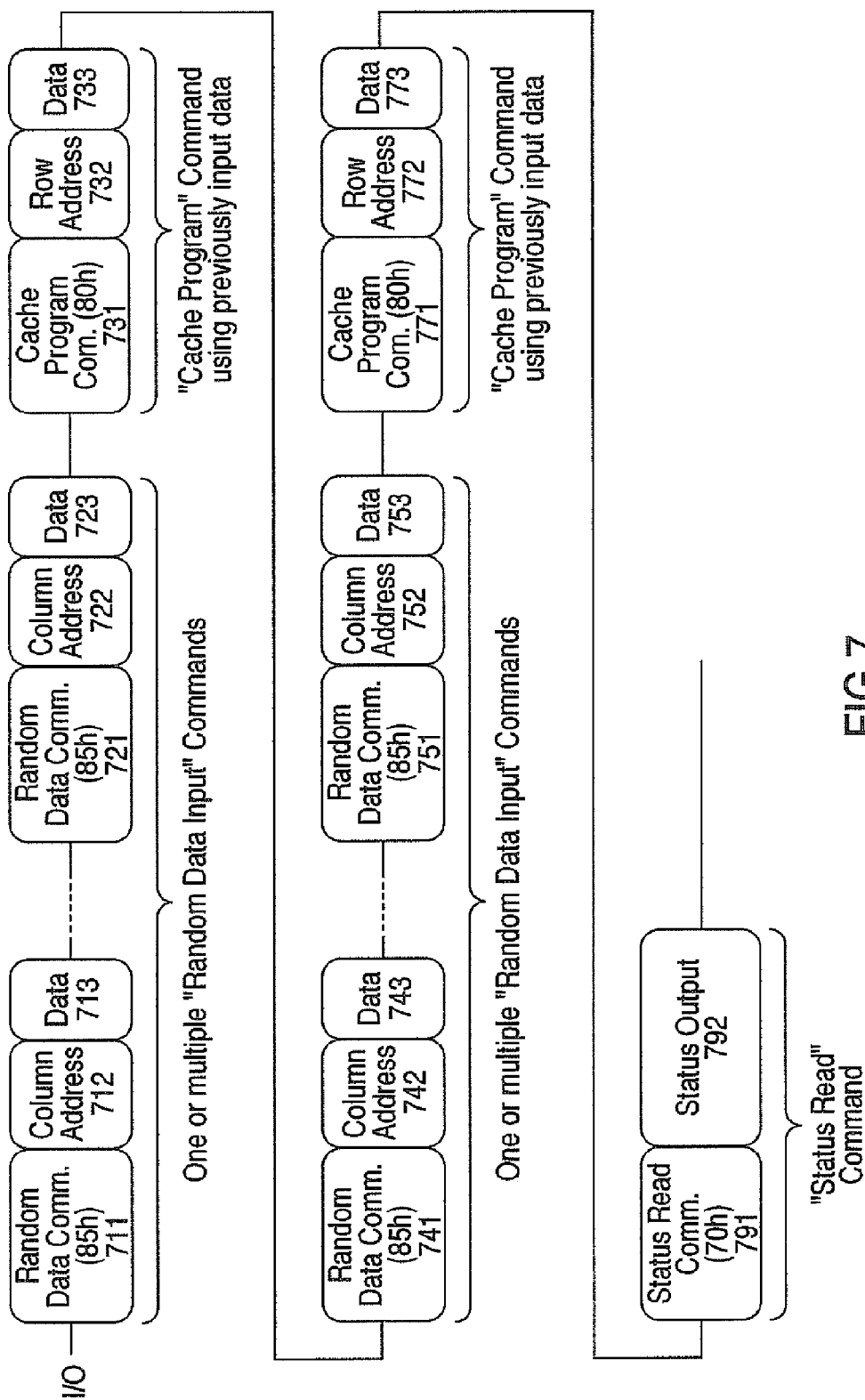


FIG 7

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RAPID MEMORY BUFFER WRITE STORAGE SYSTEM AND METHOD

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This Application is a Continuation of and claims the benefit of and priority to application Ser. No. 12/337,963 entitled RAPID MEMORY BUFFER WRITE STORAGE SYSTEM AND METHOD (filed Dec. 18, 2008), which is incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates generally to a information storage systems and methods and more particularly, to systems and methods for altering information stored in a memory.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Electronic systems and circuits have made a significant contribution towards the advancement of modern society and are utilized in a number of applications to achieve advantageous results. Electronic technologies such as digital computers, calculators, audio devices, video equipment, and telephone systems have facilitated increased productivity and reduced costs in analyzing and communicating data, ideas and trends in most areas of business, science, education and entertainment. Frequently, the electronic systems designed to provide these results include memories. However, accessing memory resources in a fast and efficient manner can involve complicated protocols.

Numerous electronic devices include processors that operate by executing software comprising a series of instructions for manipulating data in the performance of useful tasks. The instructions and associated data are typically stored in a memory. Memories usually consist of a location for storing information and a unique indicator or address. The utility a device provides often depends upon the speed and efficiency at which instructions are executed. The ability to access a memory and transfer information quickly and conveniently usually has a significant impact on information processing latency. In traditional systems such as shown in FIG. 1A, information is typically transferred from a host 10 to a buffer 21 in a memory controller 20 while complete address information is determined and then the data and physical address information is transferred to a buffer 31 of memory 30. FIGS. 1B and 1C are block diagrams of conventional data input command cycle sequences in which column and row address information is determined before the data is transferred to the buffer 31 in memory 30.

Traditional attempts at memory control are often very convoluted and complex. Such protocols also suffer from inefficiency and overhead in regards to latency and available bandwidth throughout the system, which can result in issues with scheduling due to unknown traffic patterns and limited resources. Such latency problems can be experienced by a host attempting to read or write information to the memory. There are a number of applications (e.g., real time applications) where processing time is critical and extended latency in retrieving or writing information to a memory can have detrimental impacts on performance and user experience. For example, in real time applications extended latency can cause jumpy presentations.

Information is typically written by a program operation that programs or writes a particular memory cell or group of cells (e.g., page, block, etc.). The particular memory cell is typically assigned an identification or address and the system

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utilizes the address in tracking which cell is storing a particular piece of information. Conventional memory cells are typically configured in a memory array arranged in columns and rows. Traditional approaches can exacerbate latency delays when determining the appropriated column and row indication for an address.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Efficient and convenient storage systems and methods are presented. In one embodiment a storage system includes a host for processing information, a memory controller and a memory. The memory controller controls communication of the information between the host and the memory, wherein the memory controller routes data rapidly to a buffer of the memory without buffering in the memory controller. The memory stores the information. The memory includes a buffer for temporarily storing the data while corresponding address information is determined.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and form a part of this specification, illustrate embodiments of the invention by way of example and not by way of limitation. The drawings referred to in this specification should be understood as not being drawn to scale except if specifically noted.

FIG. 1A is a block diagram of a conventional data flow in traditional system.

FIG. 1B is a block diagram of a conventional random data input command cycle sequence.

FIG. 1C is a block diagrams of conventional data input command cycle sequences in which address information for a plurality of rows is determined before the data is transferred to the buffer.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of an exemplary memory system in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a flow chart of an exemplary memory alteration process utilizing a rapid memory buffer write in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4A is a block diagram of an exemplary rapid buffer program sequence method in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4B is a timing diagram in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention corresponding to the rapid buffer program sequence method.

FIG. 5A is a block diagram of an exemplary rapid buffer program sequence method utilizing a default column address in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5B is an exemplary timing diagram in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention corresponding to the rapid buffer program sequence method utilizing a default column address.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of an exemplary random data input command cycle sequence in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7 is a block diagram of an exemplary random data input command cycle sequence with a cache program in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reference will now be made in detail to the preferred embodiments of the invention, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. While the invention will be described in conjunction with the preferred embodi-

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ments, it will be understood that they are not intended to limit the invention to these embodiments. On the contrary, the invention is intended to cover alternatives, modifications and equivalents, which may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. Furthermore, in the following detailed description of the present invention, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. However, it will be obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well known methods, procedures, components, and circuits have not been described in detail as not to unnecessarily obscure aspects of the current invention.

Some portions of the detailed descriptions which follow are presented in terms of procedures, logic blocks, processing, and other symbolic representations of operations on data bits within a computer memory. These descriptions and representations are the means generally used by those skilled in data processing arts to effectively convey the substance of their work to others skilled in the art. A procedure, logic block, process, etc., is here, and generally, conceived to be a self-consistent sequence of steps or instructions leading to a desired result. The steps include physical manipulations of physical quantities. Usually, though not necessarily, these quantities take the form of electrical, magnetic, optical, or quantum signals capable of being stored, transferred, combined, compared, and otherwise manipulated in a computer system. It has proven convenient at times, principally for reasons of common usage, to refer to these signals as bits, values, elements, symbols, characters, terms, numbers, or the like.

It should be borne in mind, however, that all of these and similar terms are associated with the appropriate physical quantities and are merely convenient labels applied to these quantities. Unless specifically stated otherwise as apparent from the following discussions, it is appreciated that throughout the present application, discussions utilizing terms such as “processing”, “computing”, “calculating”, “determining”, “displaying” or the like, refer to the action and processes of a computer system, or similar processing device (e.g., an electrical, optical, or quantum, computing device), that manipulates and transforms data represented as physical (e.g., electronic) quantities. The terms refer to actions and processes of the processing devices that manipulate or transform physical quantities within a computer system’s component (e.g., registers, memories, other such information storage, transmission or display devices, etc.) into other data similarly represented as physical quantities within other components.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a memory system 100 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Memory system 100 includes host 110, memory controller 120, and memory 130. Host 110 is coupled to memory controller 120, which is coupled to memory 130. In one embodiment, memory 130 includes core memory array 131, memory logic 132 and page buffer 133.

The components of memory system 100 cooperatively operate to store information. Host 110 processes information. Memory controller 120 controls communication of the information between host 110 and memory 130. Memory 130 stores the information for host 110. In one exemplary implementation, core memory array 131 is an array of memory cells for storing bits arranged in rows and columns. The rows can be associated with addresses configured to store a “word” of bits at a particular address. Memory logic 132 coordinates the operations within memory 130. In one embodiment the memory 130 is a NAND device.

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In one embodiment, storing information in memory system 100 involves writing and erasing information in core memory array 131. It is appreciated the present invention is readily adaptable to a variety of writing and erasing operations. The page buffer 133 temporarily stores data to be forwarded to the core memory array 131. For example, memory system 100 can perform rapid memory buffer write operations.

In one embodiment, the memory system 100 performs a rapid memory buffer write operation with a reordered command cycle sequence. The memory alteration includes one or more command cycles in which various write operations are performed. In one embodiment, the write operations in a command cycle can include a command indication, data and some of the address information. For example, during a write operation the host system sends the memory controller an indication to write data and also sends an indication of a logical address associated with the data. In one embodiment, during a rapid memory buffer write the memory controller rapidly forwards the data to a buffer of a memory device (e.g., page buffer 133 of memory device 130, etc.) and is not stored in a buffer of a memory controller (e.g., memory controller 120) while complete corresponding address information is determined. The memory controller can rapidly forward just the data or can also rapidly forward some address information (e.g., column address information, etc.). The buffer (e.g., page buffer 133, etc.) of the memory device temporarily stores the data until the remainder of the address information (e.g., row address, etc.) is determined by the memory controller (e.g., memory controller 120, etc.). In one exemplary implementation, the information can also be temporarily stored in the page buffer for one or more random data input command cycles.

It is appreciated that the present invention facilitates efficient write operations. In many of the embodiments and exemplary implementations described herein, the terms, “rapid”, “rapidly”, “direct”, “directly”, “quickly”, “immediately”, etc. are utilized to convey the communication of data to a memory device without being stored in a buffer of a memory controller while complete corresponding physical address information is determined. It is appreciated that utilization of the terms direct or directly to indicate information (e.g., data, a portion of address information, etc.) is communicated to a memory device also encompasses implementations in which the information flows through other components (e.g., memory controller, etc.). In one embodiment, the data received from the host can be “directly” forwarded to a buffer of the memory (e.g., memory device’s data buffer, memory device’s page buffer, etc.) “via” other components (e.g., a memory controller, etc.) and stored in the buffer of the memory while the remaining portion of the corresponding address information is determined.

FIG. 2 also illustrates one exemplary flow of data in memory system 100 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In one embodiment, at least a portion of the address information (e.g., row information, etc.) is determined after the data is stored in the buffer of the memory device, unlike a conventional approach in which the memory controller completely translates the logical block address (LBA) from the host system into a physical block address (PBA) of the memory device prior to initiating a program sequence to the memory device. In one exemplary implementation, the present rapid memory buffer write operation utilizes the page buffer in the memory device as a temporary storage until the row address value of the physical block address (PBA) is determined. Thus, the conventional buffer in

the memory controller is not required for storing data while the row address value of the physical block address (PBA) is determined.

In one embodiment, when determining the physical block address (PBA), the memory controller determines both the target row and column addresses in the memory device. The determination is split into two phases since determining target row address information takes more time than the target column address information. Splitting the determination into two phases facilitates communication of a portion of the address information and data rapidly to the buffer of a memory device before the remaining portion of the address information is determined.

It is appreciated the present invention is readily adaptable to efficiently utilize characteristics of a memory column and row configuration. In one exemplary implementation, each 2 KB row in a memory device contains four physical block address (PBA) regions (4×512 B+spare). The starting column address for the four PBA regions can be specified by the two least significant bits of the logical block address (LBA) from the host. In this exemplary implementation, the column address can be calculated directly and forwarded to the memory device while the target row address requires a much more significant amount of calculation time. The column address information can also be directly forwarded if the load buffer command default to column address zero in the page buffer. It is appreciated that the present invention is readily adaptable to a variety of sequence orders that are different from conventional approaches.

FIG. 3 is a flow chart of exemplary memory alteration process 300 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In one embodiment, memory alteration process 300 loads data in a memory device buffer before some portion of the address information is forwarded to the memory device.

In step 310, an indication is received to write data to a cell. It is appreciated that the indication can also be to write data to a group of cells. In one exemplary implementation the indication to write data to a cell is received in a host.

In step 320, data is stored rapidly in a buffer of the memory. In one embodiment, the buffer is a page buffer in the memory. In one exemplary implementation, the buffer in the memory stores the data while a portion of a physical block address associated with the data is determined by a memory controller. For example, the controller determines the target row address associated with the data while the data is stored in the buffer of the memory.

In step 330, memory cell identification or address information is determined. In one exemplary implementation, resolution of the different portions of memory cell address information takes different amounts of time. For example, determination of column address information is relatively rapid while determination of row address information takes significantly longer. In one embodiment, a portion of the memory cell address information is determined after the data is stored rapidly in the buffer of the memory.

In one exemplary implementation, a column address is determined before the data is stored rapidly in a buffer of the memory. For example, a starting column address for a region including a plurality of physical block addresses can be specified by the two least significant bits of the logical block address from a host, permitting the column address to be calculated rapidly. The starting column address can also be a default address. In one embodiment, a memory controller determines a row address of a physical block address associated with the data while the data is stored in the buffer of the memory.

In step 340, the data is written or flushed to the cell in the memory array. In one embodiment, the cell is unaltered if the logical state of the data corresponds to the static state and is programmed to a state opposite of the static state if the data corresponds to an opposite logical value. For example, if the static state is a logical 1 and the data corresponds to a logical 1 the cell is left alone but if the data is a logical 0 the cell is programmed or altered to correspond to a logical 0 value.

FIG. 4a is a block diagram of exemplary rapid buffer program sequence method 400 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In one embodiment, rapid buffer program sequence method 400 has a sequence order that is different from conventional approaches. In one exemplary implementation of rapid buffer program sequence method 400 the column address is specified prior to the data transfer and the row address is issued after the data transfer. In one exemplary implementation, the starting column address that is specified is not aligned with the beginning of the row. FIG. 4b is a timing diagram in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention corresponding to rapid buffer program sequence method 400.

In step 410, a first program command is issued. In one embodiment, the first program command is a page program command or a cache program command. The first program command can be a load buffer command. In one embodiment, a command latch enable (CLE) signal is asserted and the first program command is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal. In one exemplary implementation the first program command is (80h).

In step 420, the target column address is loaded in the memory. In one embodiment, the target column address includes column bits from the physical block address (PBA). In one exemplary implementation, the starting column address for a physical block address is specified by the two least significant bits of the logical block address (LBA) from a host. In one exemplary implementation a command latch enable (CLE) signal is unasserted, an address latch enable (ALE) signal is asserted and column address information is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal.

In step 430, data is loaded into the page buffer. In one embodiment, the command latch enable (CLE) is unasserted, a write enable (WE) signal is asserted and data is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal. In one exemplary implementation, multiple pieces of data are forwarded.

In step 440, the target row address is loaded in the memory. In one embodiment, the target row address includes row bits from the physical block address (PBA). In one exemplary implementation, the write enable (WE) signal is unasserted, an address latch enable (ALE) signal is asserted and target row information is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal. It is appreciated that information associated with multiple rows can be forwarded (e.g., information associated with multiple rows corresponding to the multiple pieces of data loaded in block 420).

In step 450, a second program command is issued to the memory. The second page program command can be a page program confirm command. In one embodiment, the second page program command initiates flushing of the data from the buffer of a memory into the memory array elements (e.g., memory cells, etc.). In one exemplary implementation, the page program command is (10h). In one embodiment, an address latch enable (ALE) signal is unasserted, the command latch enable (CLE) signal is asserted and a page program command is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal.

FIG. 5A is a block diagram of exemplary rapid buffer program sequence method 500 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Rapid buffer program

sequence method **500** is similar to rapid buffer program sequence method **400** except a default column address is utilized. FIG. 5B is an exemplary timing diagram in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In another exemplary implementation, the column address is specified prior to the data transfer and the row address to be issued after the data transfer, the starting column address is specified that is not aligned with the beginning column address of the target row. For example, a first program command (e.g., a load buffer command, etc.) is issued to default to column zero, the data is loaded in to the page buffer starting at column zero, the target row address is loaded, and a page program confirm command is issued.

In step **510**, a first program command is issued. In one embodiment, the first program command is a page program command or a cache program command. The first program command can be a load buffer command. In one embodiment, a command latch enable (CLE) signal is asserted and the first program command is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal. In one exemplary implementation the first program command is (80h).

In step **520**, data is loaded into the page buffer of the memory starting at column **0**. In one embodiment, the command latch enable (CLE) is unasserted, a write enable (WE) signal is asserted and data is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal. In one exemplary implementation, multiple pieces of data are forwarded.

In step **530**, the target row address (PBA) is loaded in the memory. In one exemplary implementation, any additional column information is irrelevant or not loaded. In one embodiment, the target row address includes row bits from the physical block address (PBA). In one exemplary implementation, the write enable (WE) signal is unasserted, an address latch enable (ALE) signal is asserted and target row information is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal. It is appreciated that information associated with multiple rows can be forwarded, (e.g., information associated with multiple rows corresponding the multiple pieces of data loaded in block **420**).

In step **540**, a second program command is issued to the memory. The second program command can be a page program confirm command. In one embodiment, the second page program command initiates flushing of the data from the buffer of a memory into the memory array elements (e.g., memory cells, etc.). In one exemplary implementation, the page program command is (10h). In one embodiment, an address latch enable (ALE) signal is unasserted, the command latch enable (CLE) signal is asserted and a page program command is forwarded as an input/output (I/O) signal.

In one embodiment, the page program command is broken into two phases. The first phase is a data input phase and the second phase includes the actual program operation. In one embodiment a flash internal state machine is readily adaptable to enable a variety of page program sequences. In one exemplary implementation, data is loaded in bursts into a page buffer of the memory and loading the target row address corresponding to the data is at the discretion of firmware. In one embodiment, a memory internal state machine (e.g., utilizing memory logic **132**, etc.) can enable program sequences.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of random data input command cycle sequence **600** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In one embodiment, one or more random data input command cycles are forwarded before a load command cycle with row address information. For example, a plurality of command cycles are executed including random data load command (85h) **611**, column address **612**, data **613**, random data load command (85h) **621**, column address **622**,

data **623**, random data load command (85h) **631**, column address **632**, data **623** all of which are forwarded to the memory device before row addresses included with a first program command (80h) **641** (e.g., a load program command, etc.), column address **642**, row address **643**, and program confirm command **645**. In one exemplary implementation, the memory does not care about column address **642** and utilizes column address information **612**, **622** and **623** or utilizes a default column address. In one embodiment a status read command **651** is issued and a status output **652** is forwarded.

In one embodiment, the column address is not required because there is no data entry taking place after command 80h. In one exemplary implementation the column address is declared "don't care". Alternatively there is an additional data input phase (not shown) after the row or page address. A new command code can also be defined which acts like 80h but skips the column address phase. In one exemplary implementation the new command code is used with data management controllers (e.g., management command controllers that combine inputting the spare area data and submitting the page program command into a single operation, etc.).

FIG. 7 is a block diagram of random data input command cycle sequence **700** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In one embodiment, one or more random data input command cycles are forwarded before a program cache command cycle. For example, a plurality of command cycles are executed including random data load command (85h) **711**, column address **712**, data **713**, random data load command (85h) **721**, column address **722**, and data **723** before row addresses included with load cache command (80h) **731**, row address or page address **732**, data **733**, and program confirm command **734** are forwarded to the memory device. There can also be a second group of random data input command cycles. For example, a second plurality of command cycles are executed including random data load command (85h) **741**, column address **742**, data **743**, random data load command (85h) **751**, column address **752**, and data **753** before row addresses included with load cache command (80h) **771**, row address or page address **772**, data **773** and program confirm command **774** are forwarded to the memory device. In one exemplary implementation, the memory does not care about column address **732** and column address **772**. In one embodiment a status read command **751** is issued and a status output **752** is forwarded.

In one embodiment, forwarding a portion of the address information after the data (e.g., in a different phase, in a different command cycle, etc) enables memory controller or data management controllers (e.g., secure digital (SD) or multi-media card (MMC) controllers) to eliminate expensive internal random access memory (RAM) data buffers which would otherwise be required for holding data in the memory controller while calculating the portion of the address information (e.g., row address, page address, etc.). It is appreciated the data can be received over a variety of interfaces (e.g., universal serial bus (USB) interface, secure digital (SD) interface, multi-media card (MMC) interface, etc.).

In one exemplary implementation, firmware inside the memory controllers calculates the row or page address to be used and also calculates control data and error correction code (ECC) information (e.g. ECC information to be stored in the page spare area, etc.). The firmware can also forward a program command with page+spare data to the memory device (e.g., flash device, etc.). In the present exemplary implementation, the data received from the host can be rapidly or immediately forwarded to a buffer of the memory (e.g., memory device's data buffer, etc.) while firmware cal-

culates the page address to be used and the control data and ECC information. Spare area data is input into the memory device's data buffers when this calculation has finished and before the page program command is forwarded. In addition, the present exemplary implementation also allows for scaling of data buffer space when multiple [OR] NAND dies are used to implement interleaved programming. Without this extension, the controller typically has to be optimized for a particular number of memory dies and a particular size of page buffers within these dies.

In one embodiment, the page data can be selectively patched with new information and programmed into a new location. In one exemplary implementation, this is similar to a "Page Duplicate Program" operation. Data management controllers often have to read a page (e.g., 2K+spare, etc.), overwrite just 512-bytes, update spare data and program the new 2K+spare into a new location. In one embodiment, firmware can load the page into the data buffer using command 00h, then submit one or multiple random data input commands (85h) and program the new page contents using command 80h. In addition, repeating page contents (e.g., same page+spare contents to be programmed into multiple pages, etc.) can be more efficiently programmed because the data pattern is input once and can be programmed multiple times.

Thus, the present invention facilitates efficient and effective information storage. The present invention enables reduction of buffer resources in a memory controller. Elimination of the buffer in the memory controller can result in a reduced controller die size. In addition, the elimination of the buffer in the memory controller can also improve overall system performance because data transfer flows rapidly from the host to the memory device without being stored in the memory controller for determination of the complete address information.

The foregoing descriptions of specific embodiments of the present invention have been presented for purposes of illustration and description. They are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed, and obviously many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention and its practical application, to thereby enable others skilled in the art to best utilize the invention and various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated. It is intended that the scope of the invention be defined by the Claims appended hereto and their equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A memory write method comprising:
issuing a first program command to a memory;
loading data into a buffer of said memory;
breaking page program commands into a first phase in which at least a portion of a data input command cycle is forwarded to said memory, and a second phase in which at least a portion of a load command cycle with row address information is forwarded to said memory, wherein said portion of said data input command cycle is forwarded before said portion of said load command cycle with row address information; and
issuing a program confirm command.
2. A memory write method of claim 1 wherein a column address is specified prior to loading of the data.
3. A memory write method of claim 1 wherein a target column address includes column bits from a physical block address (PBA).
4. A memory write method of claim 1 wherein a target column address is declared don't care.

5. A memory write method of claim 1 wherein a starting column address is specified that is not aligned with the beginning of a row.

6. A memory write method of claim 1 wherein bursts of loading data into said buffer of said memory and loading a target row address corresponding to the data is at the discretion of firmware.

7. A memory write method of claim 1 wherein said buffer is a page buffer included in said memory.

8. A memory system comprising:

- a host for processing information including data;
- a memory for storing said information, including a memory array for storing information and a buffer for temporarily storing information before the information is forwarded to the memory array; and
- a memory controller for controlling communication of said information between said host and said memory, wherein said memory controller routes data rapidly to the buffer of said memory without buffering in said memory controller while complete corresponding address information is determined, wherein one or more random data input command cycles are forwarded to said memory before a program cache command cycle is forwarded.

9. A memory system of claim 8 wherein said buffer is a page buffer in said memory.

10. A memory system of claim 8 wherein said host performs a rapid memory page buffer write operation with a reordered sequence in which a column address is specified prior to the data transfer and a row address is issued after the data transfer.

11. A memory system of claim 8 wherein the memory accepts additional information, including spare data.

12. A memory system of claim 8 wherein a buffer space is scalable.

13. A memory system of claim 8 including multiple gates utilized to implement interleaved programming.

14. A memory alteration method comprising:

- receiving an indication to write data to a cell;
- forwarding data and a first portion of memory cell address information rapidly to a buffer of a memory, wherein the first portion of said memory cell address information is determined before the data is stored in the buffer; and
- determining memory cell identification or address information, wherein a second portion of the memory cell address information is determined while the data is stored in the buffer of the memory.

15. A memory alteration method of claim 14 wherein the data is selectively patched with new information.

16. A memory alteration method of claim 15 wherein the data patched with the new information is programmed into a new location.

17. A memory alteration method of claim 14 wherein the data includes spare data.

18. A memory alteration method of claim 14 wherein the data is included in a data pattern that is forwarded to the memory once and programmed multiple times in the memory.

19. A memory alteration method of claim 14 wherein a rapid memory page buffer write operation is performed with a reordered sequence in which a column address is specified prior to the data transfer and a row address is issued after the data transfer.

20. A memory alteration method of claim 14 wherein ECC information is determined while the data is stored in the buffer of the memory.